



A VISION FOR A NEW First Street Promenade

ROCHESTER, MN



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 **PPS**
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First Street Promenade

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FIRST STREET PROMENADE



PEACE PLAZA



ANNENBERG/GONDA PLAZA

Downtown's Hidden Attraction

Public places are the stage where our public lives unfold. They are the parks where celebrations are held, where children play, and where cultures mix. They are the sidewalks in front of homes and businesses where we run into our friends, where social and economic exchanges take place. They are the “front porches” of our public institutions—libraries, community centers, city hall, hospitals the post office—where we play our important roles as neighbors and citizens. People living in cities with thriving public spaces enjoy a strong sense of community; people that lack thriving public spaces feel less connected to one another.

Good public places are what make cities great. All cities need vital destinations that establish a positive identity and that attract new residents, businesses and investment. A good destination might be a main street, a downtown park or waterfront, a library, coffee shop, or the square in front of a church—anywhere people like to gather.

One spot in downtown Rochester is key. If Peace Plaza and Annenberg Plaza were linked by an improved First Street, a major destination could be created, connecting First and Second Avenues. First Street could become a “promenade” that joins not only these plazas but also many other potentially great places downtown, functioning as the heart of a revitalized downtown district. First Street is flanked by two key destinations for both tourists and residents: the Kahler and Marriott Hotels. Both of these hotels feature restaurants and shops that link into both the skyway and the subway systems, as well as nearby Mayo Clinic facilities. The Galleria at the east end of First Street is a significant shopping destination and the Barnes & Noble bookstore located in a grand old movie theater is clearly a major attraction. The new Gonda Building of Mayo Clinic draws many people downtown for work or medical services.

While there are many opportunities, there are also many challenges. The main problem is that this area of downtown currently does not generate much public activity. The places for people to go after work are not obvious or inviting; the blank walls on the ground floors of many buildings offer little of interest for pedestrians to look at or to draw people in. There are few amenities that support the kind of lively street life that occurs in other cold-weather cities such as Duluth, Stillwater, or even Fargo, North Dakota. If even modest improvements were made, the downtown experience for both visitors and residents could be greatly enhanced. And downtown Rochester's hidden attraction could become the place that both locals and visitors will gather and savor an authentic, enjoyable, urban experience.



New Pride for Downtown

Vital cities of any size owe their success to good public places. And most successful places have smaller, more intimate places within them. A popular riverfront park, for example, might host a playground, a fishing pier, a refreshment stand, picnic tables, a trail, a fountain, a historical display and more. And in each of these spots, there should be a number of things to do, which can range from big productions like watching a concert to simple pleasures like taking a walk or watching kayakers on the river. Taken all together, these activities, places and destinations add up to an exciting city.

Public spaces in Rochester could be the source of the city's greatest potential. On November 9th, 2005 the City of Rochester, the Rochester Downtown Alliance, and Project for Public Spaces, Inc. conducted a Placemaking workshop to tap the ample energy and vision of Rochester citizens about how to create more vibrant public spaces in the downtown area. As part of the workshop, 30 key downtown stakeholders were asked to pick the most important places in Rochester, both downtown and in the larger metropolitan area.

The places they identified were announced and a lively discussion ensued about their positive and negative attributes. Interestingly many of the top places people picked were near what could become the First Street Promenade and other downtown spaces around which the workshop was being organized: Peace Plaza, the Chateau Theater (Barnes & Noble), the Gonda Atrium and garden (second floor), the Galleria Mall, and Annenberg Plaza. Many others were nearby: the Mayo Civic Center and Park, Mayo Park and Field, the Rochester Public Library, the Art Center and Central Park.

First Street Promenade could become the pride of Rochester. With Peace Plaza and Annenberg Plaza it could function as a town square for the community, a place with activities that will draw people downtown. The promenade would not only become an attraction itself, but would connect a number of Rochester's best places in a way that become more than the sum of the parts.

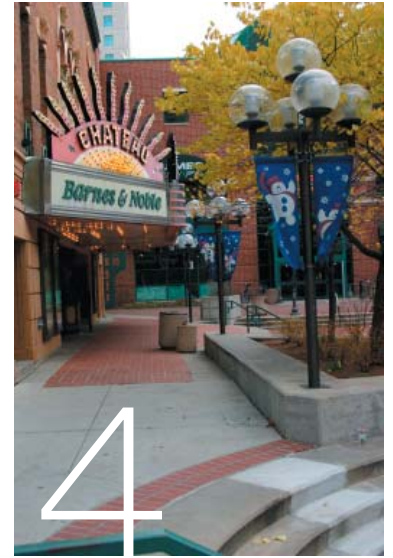


Mayo Civic Center

Peace Plaza



Mayo Park



Chateau Theatre

Rochester Public Library



Gonda Atrium and Garden
Annenberg Plaza



Galleria Mall



Michael's Restaurant



Art Center

First Street Promenade, Rochester 7



ENVISIONING THE First Street Promenade

At the Placemaking workshop, held at the Kahler Hotel November 9, 2005, a vision was developed for First Street and adjacent areas in downtown Rochester. This vision, from which the idea of the First Street Promenade springs, includes the following elements:

- A central gathering place should be developed. First Street Promenade will link First Avenue, Peace Plaza and the Galleria with Annenberg Plaza, Second Avenue and the Gonda Building during all seasons. The city already does a good job catering to visitors of the Mayo Clinic. It should also reach out to downtown employees and, in the future, to residents who live downtown.
- Start simple. The physical design for the First Street Promenade is a framework from which to build activities and uses upon; in a sense, a stage for which Rochester's citizens and visitors can perform. We recommend the framework be kept simple at first, allowing for experimentations to decipher what works best in the space, and then improved upon as best seen fit.
- Develop a seasonal, all-weather strategy and events plan. Throughout all seasons of the year, the First Street Promenade and Peace and Annenberg plazas should have attractions to attract people. Winter activities could include a temporary ice skating rink, ice and snow sculpture competitions, and hot chocolate and coffee vendors. Summer activities could include markets and outdoor dining.
- The pedestrian should be king (or queen). Throughout the area between the Galleria and Peace Plaza, Annenberg Plaza and the Gonda Building and First and Second Avenues, the pedestrian should take priority. Traffic should be calmed throughout the area by extending curbs at intersections, clearly marking crosswalks, and adding angle parking, which has the added benefit of creating more convenient access to shops and increasing the perception that this area is primarily for shopping, dining and strolling.

- Street level retail should be a priority. New types of storefront retail should be added in some spots while existing retail uses should be moved and/or enhanced in others. This will likely require some retail analysis and a possible retail repositioning of the existing and new shops within the Kahler Hotel and the Galleria. Locating restaurants and cafes at street level with the flexibility to offer dining on the sidewalk whenever weather permits is a priority.
- Emphasize a lively mix of downtown businesses. At street level, the visual impact of medical and financial institutions should be minimized, while the visibility of other downtown activity should be maximized. With the multitude of medical related services and destinations in this area, it is easy to be satisfied that the downtown has enough destinations. The danger is in allowing these important uses to dominate the entire downtown pedestrian experience.
- The district should be lightened and brightened up. There is a striking lack of color in this area at the pedestrian level. Colored lighting should be considered wherever possible to provide a feeling of liveliness and activity along the street.
- There should be no blank walls in this area. The ground floors of all buildings should present something of interest, whether it be a shop (with doors that open to the street), a street level exhibit, and where these things are not possible, a mural or informational display and lighting.
- General orientation at street level should be improved. It is now common for people to get disoriented in this area—to not know where they are and what types of cultural, retail and other services are available. And the three tiers of pedestrian circulation (skyway, street level and subway) make it difficult to know all of the assets downtown offers. A kiosk, and better signage on the streets and buildings would help to address this problem and provide more visual and physical connections between the three layers.





Why Create a Place?

There are many far-reaching reasons to creating great **places** like the First Street Promenade. And there are benefits both for the regular users as well as the community at large:

- **Places** nurture and define community identity through greater community organization, a better sense of dedication and volunteerism, perpetuation of integrity and values, and a common vision.
- **Places** promote a greater sense of comfort because they are visually pleasing, generally stimulating, environmentally friendly, and promote a sense of belonging.
- **Places** draw a diverse population, including more women, children and seniors, as well as a greater ethnic and cultural mix, by supporting a wide range of activities and uses, new service, new retail, and customer niches, and encouraging community involvement and a sense of pride in the area.
- **Places** foster frequent and meaningful contact through improved sociability, cultural exposure and interaction, exchange and preservation of information, wisdom, and values, reduction of race and class barriers, and promotion of feelings of interconnection and community.



Ingredients of Successful Places

The qualities that make up a great place can be distilled into the four following basic ingredients:

Activities & Uses

A good place should be full of homegrown activities that act as the glue of their communities, drawing people to them for companionship and relaxation. A healthy variety of such uses will attract a variety of people and keep a place lively at all times of day.

Access & Linkages

A good place is visible and easy to get to. People need to see that there is something to do and that others have been enticed to enter. Conversely, if the street is too dangerous to cross, the place won't be well used. Linkages are opportunities to connect different elements so that they create a people-friendly environment that encourages strangers to talk to other strangers as if they knew each other. Easy access to transit is also an important ingredient.

Comfort & Image

Good places entice people through well-designed amenities, such as seating, shade trees, bike racks, and bulletin boards. They also entice through good management that keeps walkways clean, paint from peeling, and neighborhoods safe. Good details can tantalize – they signal that someone took the time and energy to design amenities that are welcoming and that respond to the unique needs of neighborhood people.

Sociability

A sociable place is one where people want to go to observe the passing scene, meet friends, and interact with a wide range of people. Sociability is achieved by working together with the unique, local assets that can be found in all communities, and then combining the above ingredients to make a great place.

First Street Promenade

BASE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Base Recommendations Plan, opposite, shows the most basic changes recommended for Rochester's First Street Promenade area. The ideas for improvement are based on alterations in infrastructure, lighting, and amenities and uses, which would enhance the vibrancy and quality of the public spaces between First and Second Avenues, and the First Street Promenade. Undertaking the suggestions highlighted below, along with programming the space and managing for optimal use, will set the foundation for transforming this area into a pedestrian-friendly district.

The recommendations presented represent concepts developed; they speak to ideas and do not need to be realized exactly as represented here. The three plans (the Base Recommendations, Summer Programming and Winter Programming) represent intentions of what the space could be; inevitably these ideas will evolve in the creation of a new pedestrian area for Downtown Rochester. Concepts presented are flexible, for example, light poles and movable chairs or benches are movable and can be located in numerous locations, not only where we have placed them.

Infrastructure

- **Resurface First Street** (e.g. brick), remove curbs if possible to make street one level
- **Peace Plaza raised to grade**
- **Rolled curb roundabout** at the terminus of Second Avenue in Annenberg Plaza

- **Temporary sculpture and/or fountain with planter** in the roundabout at the intersection of First Street Promenade and Second Avenue; something that is visible from Peace Plaza
- **Tabled intersection** at the crossing of First Avenue and First Street Promenade; paving flush from Peace Plaza all the way down the promenade
- **Replace Kahler Hotel overhang** with awnings or a lightweight canopy structure that keeps in the style of the historic building, historic-style marquis at entrance on Second Avenue
- **Relocated peace fountain** to provide a visual anchor that can be seen from Annenberg Plaza

Amenities/uses

- **Dance steps** in the brick pattern along the First Street Promenade
- **Chessboard** in brick pattern in Peace Plaza
- **Temporary artist designed benches** along the First Street Promenade and in Peace Plaza
- **New and relocated benches** to exterior of planters to the portion of Second Avenue south of the First Street Promenade
- **Mural** on Wells Fargo building

Retail

- **Info kiosk/newsstand** in front of the Wells Fargo

building

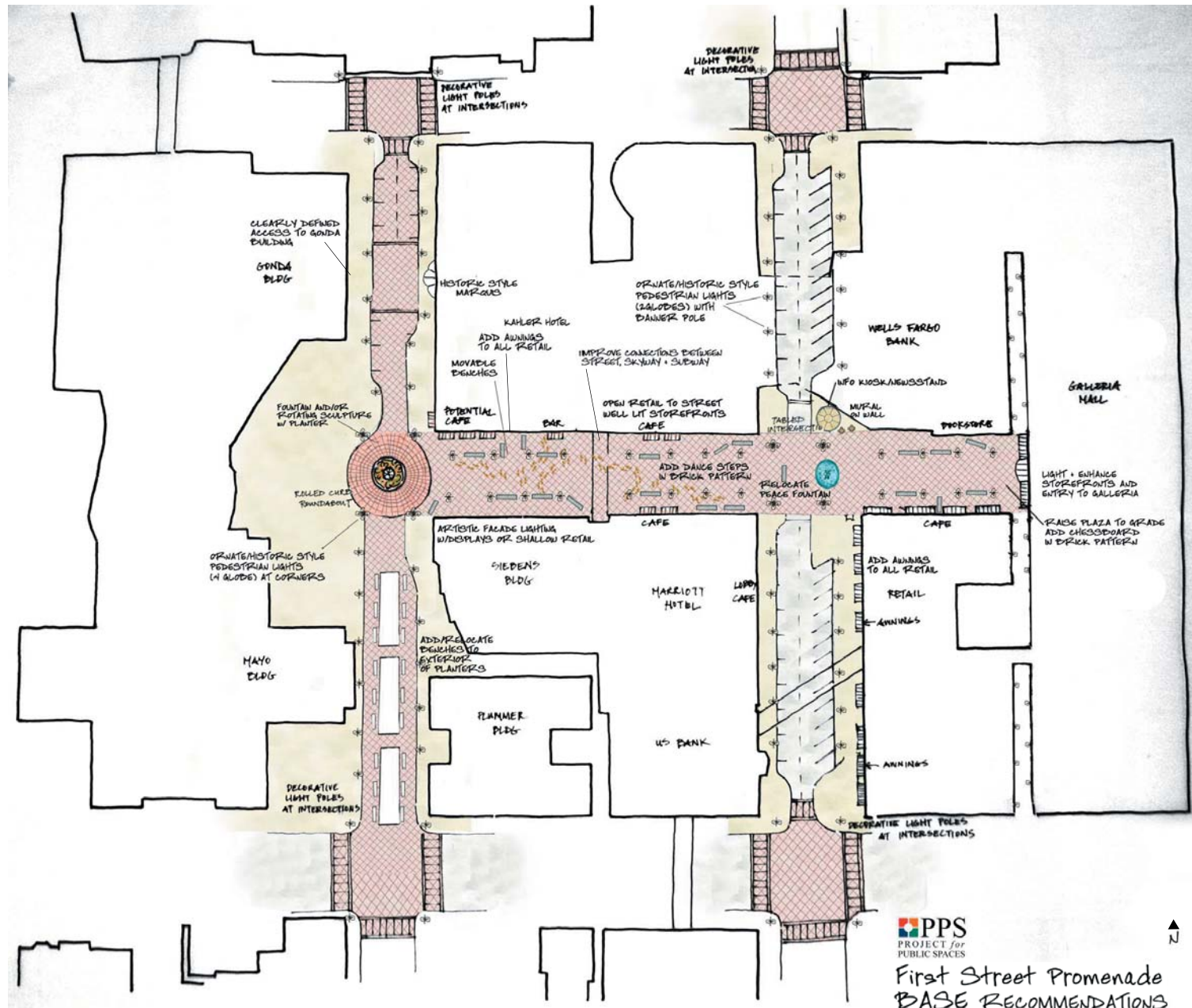
- **Café** in the Kahler hotel that would spill out into Annenberg Plaza
- **Retail open to the street** (doors) along the First Street Promenade and the First Avenue retail corridor
- **Awnings on all retail**
- **Improved visual and physical connections** between the street, the subway, and skyway levels throughout the district
- **Well lit storefronts** along First and Second Avenues and the First Street Promenade
- **Shallow retail or temporary market displays** in the recesses of the facade of the Sieben's Building

Lighting

- **Decorative light poles** at all intersections of First and Second Avenues, with Second, First and Center Streets. Ornate/historic style pedestrian lights: 4-globe at corners of the First Street Promenade with First and Second Avenues, and 2-globe with banner pole along First and Second Avenues, the First Street Promenade, and the alleys leading into Peace Plaza
- **Light and enhance storefronts** and entry to Galleria; open up the façade to draw people into the space and to relate more with Peace Plaza

First Street Promenade

BASE RECOMMENDATIONS



First Street Promenade

SUMMER PROGRAMMING

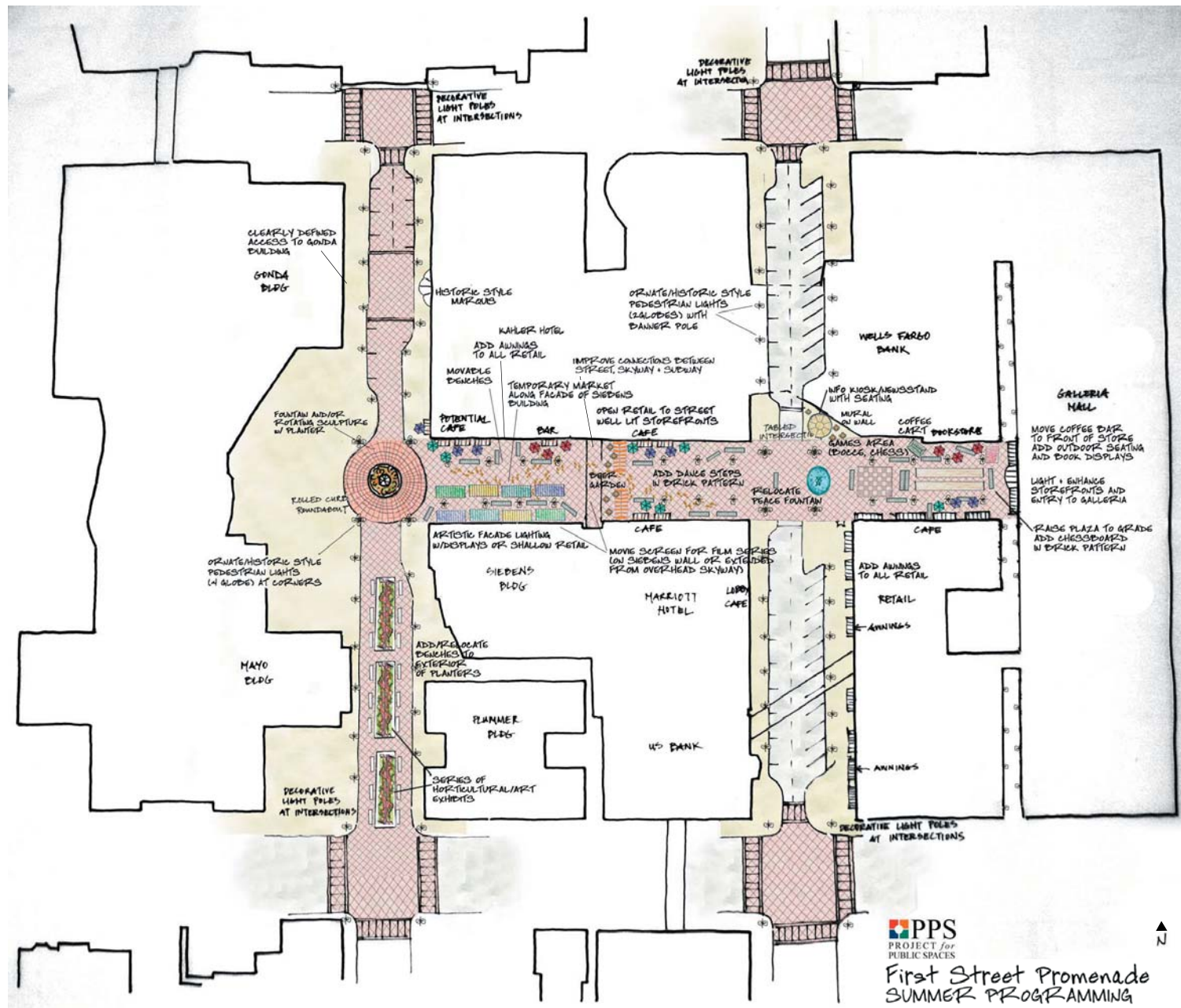
During warm weather months, special programming and temporary infrastructure changes could be made to enhance the area. Temporary summer-long activities such as outdoor dining/cafes and special events, markets, a beer garden and a movie film festival will help provide reasons for downtown's ample workforce to stay downtown after the day has finished; it will also enhance the experience for those visiting the various medical facilities in the area. Enlivening Peace Plaza with outdoor games and play areas will not only make the plaza an important destination, but it will enhance the economic vitality of the surrounding retail enterprises.

Uses

- **Temporary market** along the façade of Sieben's Building
- **Series of horticulture/art exhibits** in the planters on the southern extension of Second Avenue
- **Movie screen for film series** (on Sieben's wall or extended from overhead skyway on First Street Promenade)
- **Beer garden** in the First Street Promenade
- **Coffee bar** relocated near front of Barnes and Noble, with outdoor seating and book displays in front of the store in the plaza during good weather
- **Games area**, including bocce and chess in Peace Plaza
- **Outdoor seating** near the Info/kiosk/newsstand in front of the Wells Fargo building
- **Outdoor tables and chairs** outside of all restaurants and cafes in the district

First Street Promenade

SUMMER PROGRAMMING



First Street Promenade

WINTER PROGRAMMING

The climate in Rochester gives ample reasons for people to stay inside during the winter months, and the skyway and subway systems encourage this even more. However, both minor and major changes to the area could help to offset this pattern and draw people out into the First Street Promenade area.

A 'Winter Village' could be created to define this area as a destination during the winter months. A skating rink and fire pit in Peace Plaza could anchor the eastern edge of this district while a Holiday Tree in Annenberg Plaza would anchor the western edge. A holiday market down First Street Promenade will connect the two, with outdoor heat lamps and decorations. A similar program should also be developed for fall and spring.

Amenities/uses

- Temporary **holiday market** along First Street Promenade
- **Skating rink** in Peace Plaza
- **Fire pit** with seating at the edge of the skating rink
- **Games/reading tent** in Peace Plaza
- **Heated seating area** adjacent to the skating rink
- **Heat lamps and outdoor seating** in front of cafes on the First Street Promenade

Lighting

- **Lighted holiday tree** in Annenberg Plaza
- **Holiday display in the planters** on Second Avenue
- **Lighting all building bases** and tops
- **Lighted fir trees** in mounds throughout the district

WINTER PROGRAMMING



First Street Promenade
WINTER PROGRAMMING



1. First Street Promenade

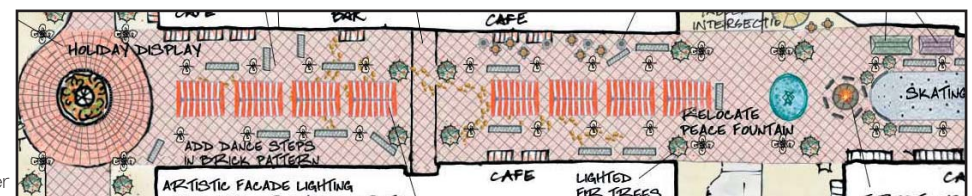
With improvement, First Street could become the central connection between Annenberg Plaza and Peace Plaza, connecting First and Second Avenues, and becoming the heart of a new pedestrian friendly downtown. This street provides the major link between the Mayo Clinic medical campus and the Central Business District. If designed and programmed properly, it can draw people from the campus to the downtown, at street level. However, there are many obstacles to overcome before it achieves its full potential. The street is too wide for the amount of vehicle traffic that it carries and it looks like a place for cars and trucks, not pedestrians. Ground floor uses along this block are either blank or appear to be empty.

The vision coming out of the November 2005 meeting is that First Street be developed as a connector and a place where people can walk, shop, sit and just enjoy themselves—a “promenade”. To encourage this type of use, adjustments should be made to the street so that it can be used for a variety of purposes at different times of year - flexibility is key. In the short term the street space can be programmed with events that attract people during different seasons. In the winter, for example, a temporary skating rink, Christmas market, ice sculptures and vendors with heated sitting areas for customers could be developed as attractions. In the summer and fall other types of markets, games such as bocce and ping pong, and temporary sitting and landscape areas would draw people. Amenities such as attractive pedestrian-scaled lighting, and awnings and banners that add color should support the intended uses. Finally, the ground floors of adjacent properties need to be enlivened so that the outer edges contribute to the outdoor life as well as the central part of the promenade.

Summer



Winter





A flexible event space
Outdoor markets, art fairs,
concerts, and games



Outdoor dining
Tables, chairs and umbrellas; movable seating near flexible
event space for informal sitting, talking and waiting.



Color and light
Awnings, large banners to advertise for
downtown cultural events, landscaping near
shops. flowers in baskets on poles; pedestrian
scale street lights, lighted storefronts and
building entrances, lighting as art projects
on blank walls and mirrored ground floor
facades



Places to sit
Benches, outdoor
cafes, temporary
seating related to
events



Effective signage
Link the skyway and subway
systems with ground floor
uses through increased
signage and more transparent
entry points to the different
systems



Visible retail and ground floor uses
Perpendicular, pedestrian oriented signs, awnings,
outdoor displays of merchandise, entrances to
stores directly from street, replacement of blank
walls with small retail uses or displays, cafés and
bars open to sidewalks

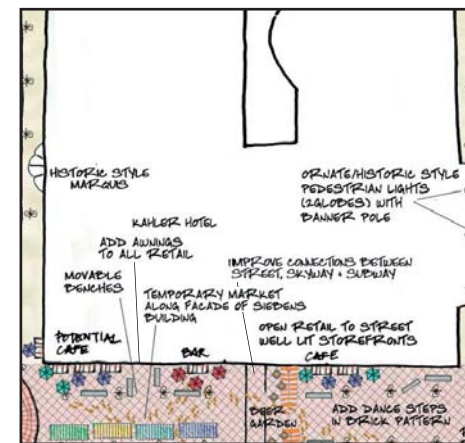


2. Kahler Hotel

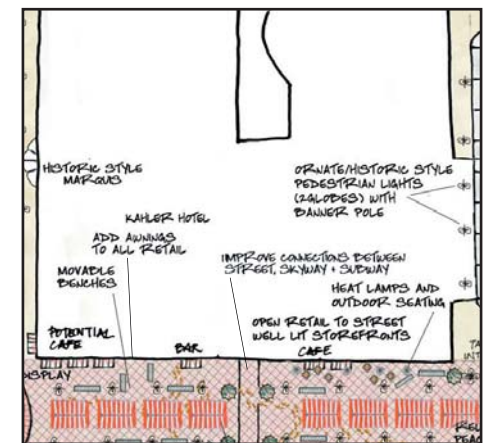
The Kahler Hotel is not only a major downtown destination for visitors to Rochester but it is also a major anchor for the proposed First Street Promenade. There are nearly 60 shops and services on the three levels inside the hotel, but only a few are at street level. And those that are at street level are nearly invisible from the sidewalks. People who work and visit downtown do use these services, but because they are internally located, they don't contribute to the liveliness of the street. These businesses may be serving only a portion of the downtown customer base that they could. With a greater street presence these shops and restaurants could attract many more people who are downtown for other reasons.

The stores and shops that are on the ground floor such as the lobby shop (which has newspapers, beverages, gifts, toothpaste and other necessities) have weak window displays, poor signage, and are hidden under the overhead arcade. Most importantly, they cannot be entered from the street. Another issue is that the retail mix is currently geared more to hospital visitors and not to downtown employees, who could be attracted to stay downtown after work. There is a balance that needs to be achieved here, but currently the scales are tipped in a way that is not serving the downtown employee base.

In order to become a truly grand hotel, the Kahler Hotel can take the lead on improving its interaction with the street and really serve as an anchor to the new downtown pedestrian area.



Summer



Winter



Retail open to the street
Shop doors open to the street,
cafés oriented toward the sidewalk
not the interior of the building,
outdoor displays and merchandise
where possible, pedestrian oriented
signs and attractive window
displays



Outdoor dining
Re-orient and/or relocate The Grand
Grill, Lord Essex and Starbucks
(within the Kahler) to the street;
provide outdoor dining opportunities



Two level retail
Bar or café at the corner of First
Street and Second Avenue on the
second level with doors/windows
that overlook First Street and
Annenberg Plaza activities

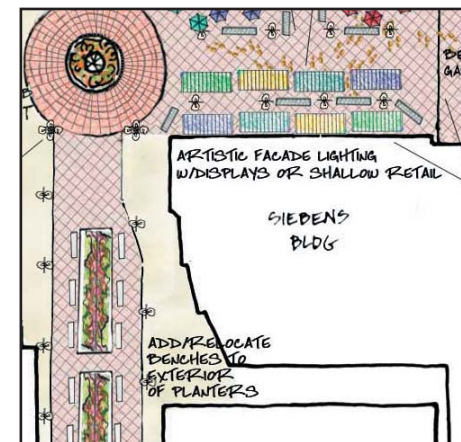


Awnings
Replace overhead canopy with bright awnings
that can be changed or removed seasonally

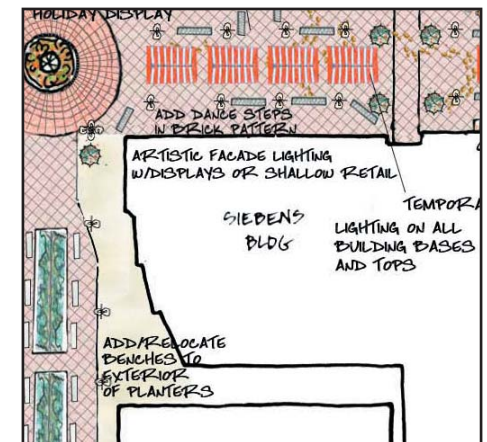


3. Siebens Building

The presence of non-retail oriented ground floor spaces, such as the Siebens building, presents a challenge in trying to create a pedestrian friendly experience along First Street. It is not uncommon that when people encounter a blank wall such as this one, they do not return to the place in the future. In some cities situations such as this have been remedied by adding displays, exhibits or art so that people walking by are encouraged not to avoid the area.



Summer



Winter

Temporary art exhibits
Murals, art exhibits, children's art projects,
history displays or current activities of
institution inside



Information about cultural
events

Nearby institutions can show the
activities that are currently going on at
churches, libraries, museums, theaters

Lighting

Projections from above or across the street,
lighting of building details, other artistic
solutions



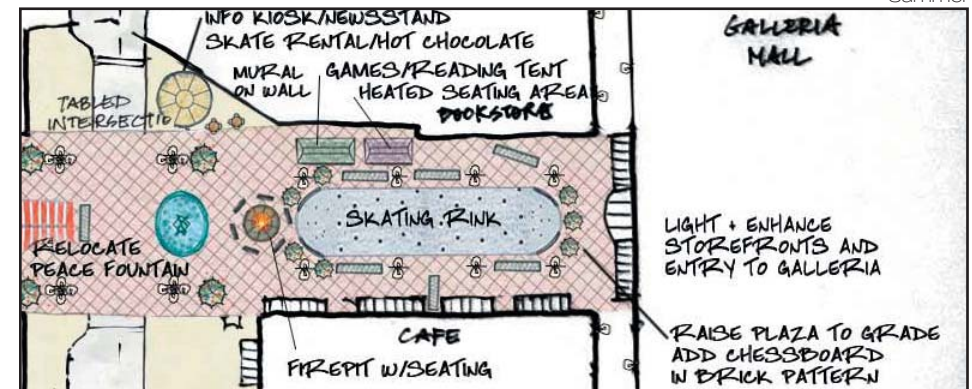
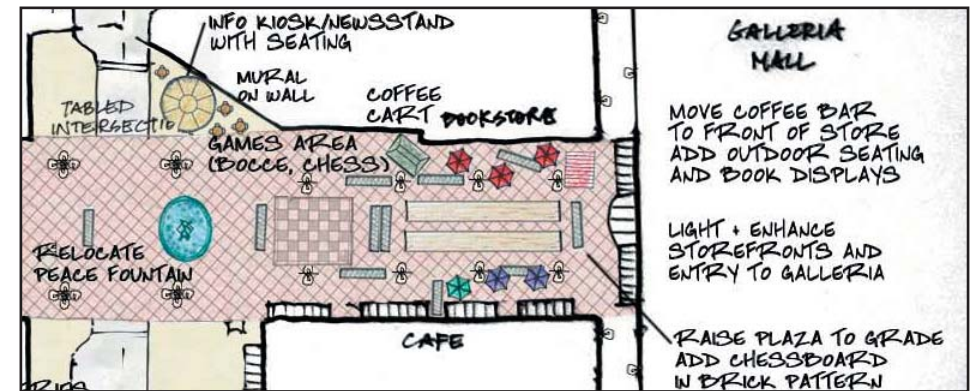
Small retail uses

Retail displays, cash machines, newsstands, shoe repair,
small shops fit into small spaces



4. Peace Plaza

When Peace Plaza was built, with its series of different levels and steps, it represented the current trend in plaza design. But it has never realized its full potential as a major destination and public space in downtown Rochester, except when it is used for special events. One of the problems is that many of the retail uses that are on the south side of the plaza are not conducive to spreading outside (e.g. outdoor cafés). And although the Barnes & Noble store is an attractive and important anchor in the plaza, it also is internalized, in part due to the nature of its architecture and to the concrete planters that are located in front of the store separating it from the plaza.



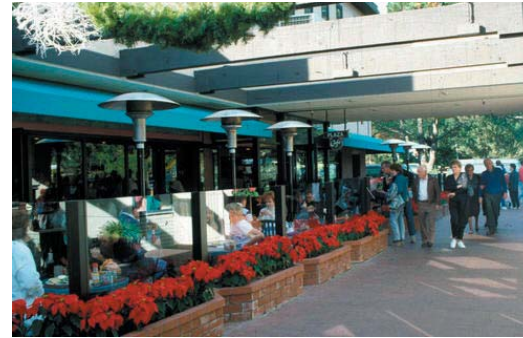
Satellite retail (seasonal)

Vending carts or kiosks related to shops that are in the Galleria, Kahler or other complexes - flowers, coffee, hot chocolate, lemonade, hot dogs, dosas, crepes, popcorn, etc.



A flexible space

Level the plaza, create more flexible space for events and for extending retail uses outside; create a setting for eating; "garden" like environment; games, outdoor displays of merchandise, movable seating



Outdoor dining (seasonal)

Extend the season for dining at existing cafe, rethink retail mix to bring a wider variety of cafes with food options that can be served quickly during brief lunch hours; focus on creativity and local foods, not on chains



Café kiosk

Satellite retail connected to existing interior space with seasonal outdoor dining, games, evening activities

Seasonal activities

Temporary ice skating rink during the winter, fire pit for warming



Information kiosk

Information about upcoming events, the location of downtown destinations, events at cultural institutions, tickets for performances

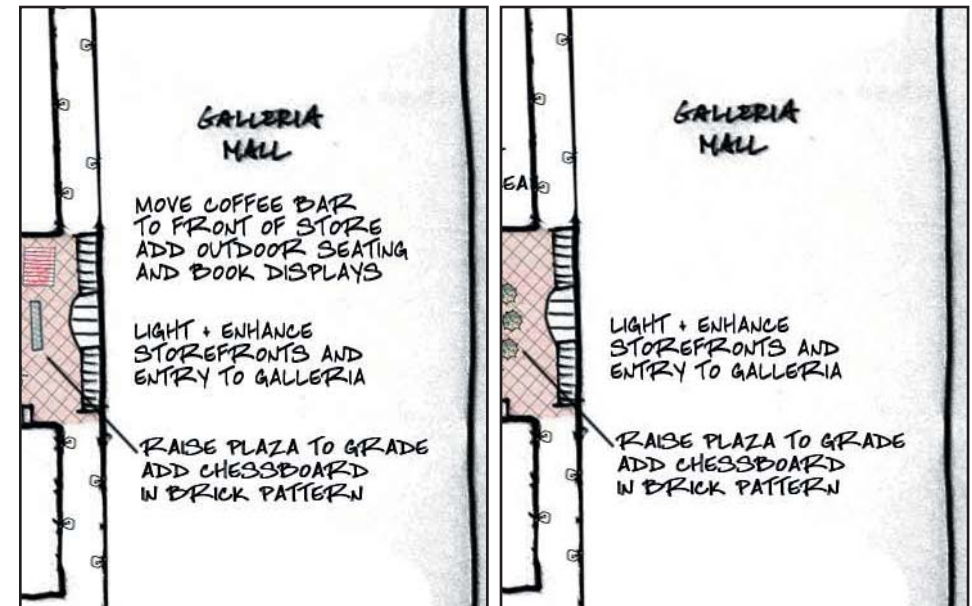




5. Galleria Mall

Although the Galleria Mall contains numerous shops and services, they are hidden inside (like the Kahler Hotel) and contribute little to creating a vibrant street life in the area. Even the ground floor glass façade that faces the plaza does not project an image of commercial activity or give any clue of what goes on within the building. This sort of inward-looking retail has another disadvantage: it does not generate any activity in the evening hours because there is nothing that attracts people inside.

The ultimate goal for the Galleria is that the front of the building be redesigned to connect with Peace Plaza. If Peace Plaza is improved and re-positioned as more of a lunchtime and evening destination, then these spaces will become more valuable. However many changes will have to be made at once to reach that goal.



Summer

Winter

Connection between Peace Plaza and Broadway

Open up the building with a glass atrium, open-air connection, retail that is oriented to the walkway as along a street, creative lighting to create the ambience and character found in older European arcades



Stronger retail presence and connection to Peace Plaza

Ground floor uses that extend into the plaza, visible and colorful signage, creative lighting, outdoor dining extended into autumn and spring, outdoor display of merchandise

Highlight architecture

Accentuate Galleria entrance with lighting, colorful awning or lighted glass entrance and art

Improved alley connections

Alleys from both the north and south provide access to the Galleria from side streets as well as provide critical “backyard” uses for retail uses. Use historic style lighting, perpendicular signage and back entrances into retail to encourage the alleys as a way into Peace Plaza.

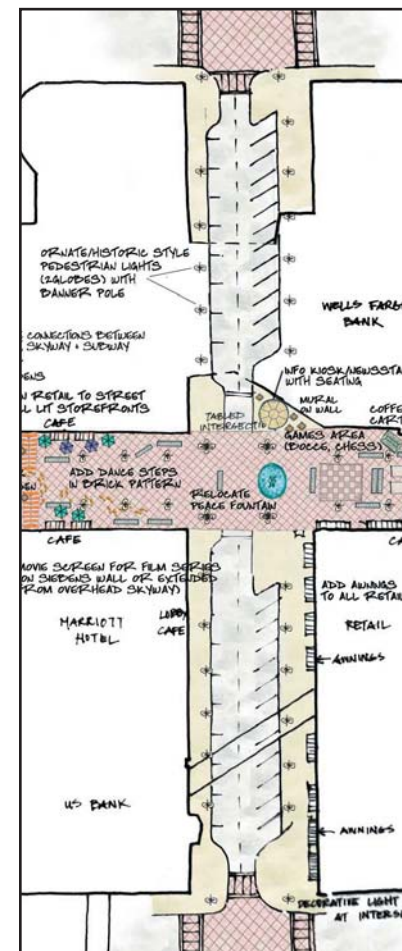




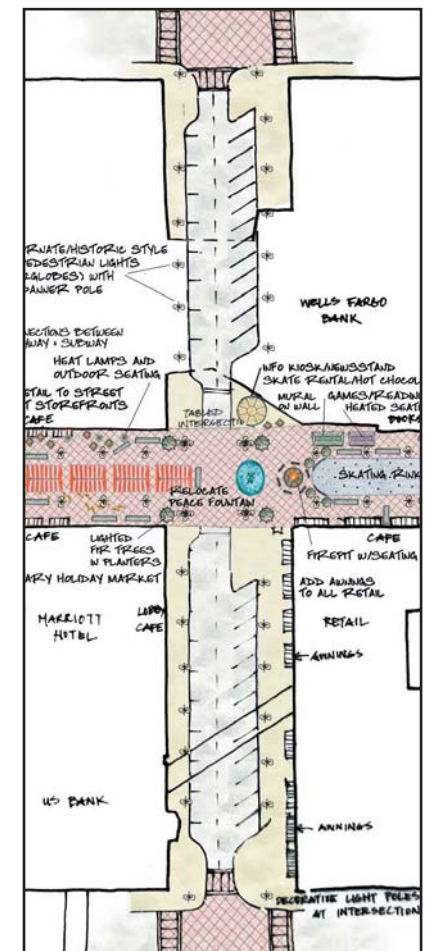
6. First Avenue

First Avenue is the major retail corridor in downtown Rochester. The economic vitality that already exists along this strip could be greatly improved by creating a more pedestrian friendly environment by improving the retail mix, and emphasizing the storefronts, window displays and basic pedestrian amenities.

Bringing the intersection of First Avenue and First Street up to grade with the First Street Promenade will allow the intersection, Peace Plaza, the Promenade and Annenberg Plaza to have a sustained continuity to them. Removing the traffic signal at this intersection and replacing with a stop sign will also calm traffic and contribute to a more pedestrian-scaled area.



Summer



Winter

Traffic calming experiments

Corners at intersections can be bumped out to create clearer and more convenient pedestrian crossings and to create the perception of a pedestrian oriented environment; crosswalks can be brightly painted, deliveries limited to off-peak times



More prominent storefronts

Upgrade storefronts with pedestrian oriented signs, colorful awnings and improved facades; architecture of building above could be enhanced with paint, architectural details and lighting



Lutefisk Dinner

Host world's longest lutefisk and lefsa dinner on the street



Angle parking

Add angle parking to increase number of parking spaces, slow traffic and create stronger perception of a retail and shopping environment; reduce traffic to two lanes



Bike racks

Provide bike racks to encourage cycling activity



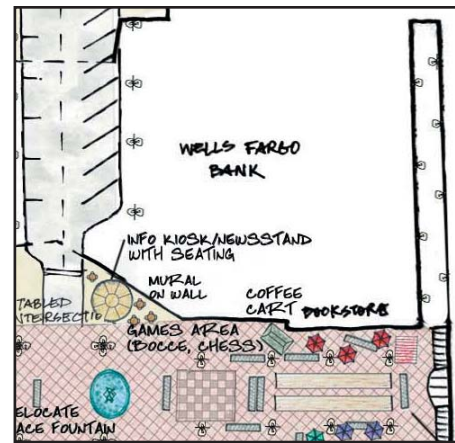
Wide sidewalks for pedestrians

Size of sidewalks can be increased to make street more pedestrian friendly, to create space for pedestrian lighting and information, and to provide a buffer for angle parking

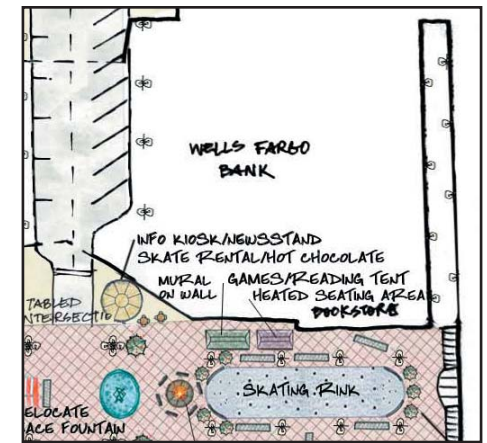


7. Wells Fargo Building

Another important destination in Rochester is the Wells Fargo facility which houses many employees who could potentially spend more time downtown. The two main challenges regarding this key institution are: 1) getting the people working inside the building to go outside to walk and shop, and 2) to improve the building so that it has a stronger retail presence on the street. The façade is essentially a giant mirror and its blank glass ground floor with no retail or exterior displays make it a dead space that attracts no one. The uses inside the building are invisible from the sidewalk.



Summer



Winter

Enhance the mirrored glass

Create pedestrian interest with a mural (like the one the Wells Fargo company paints on buses) on the mirror, projections, lighting, art



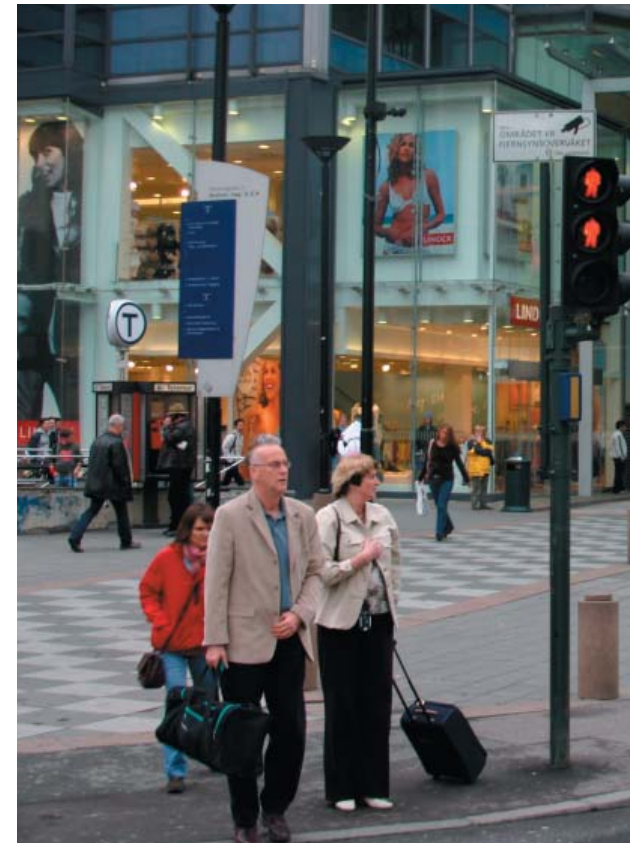
Retrofit the ground floor uses

Ground floor should be more retail oriented, with exhibits facing the street that tell the history of the company and focus on the corner



Connect the inside and the outside through the lobby

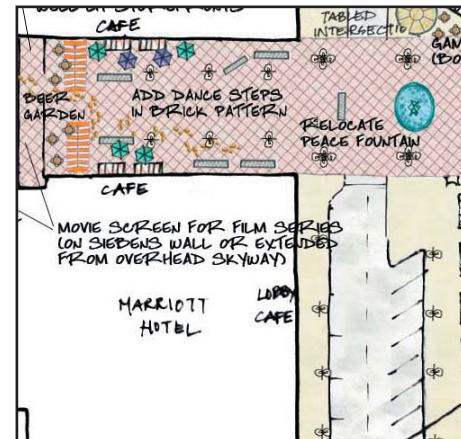
Increase presence of the lobby with more active ground floor uses



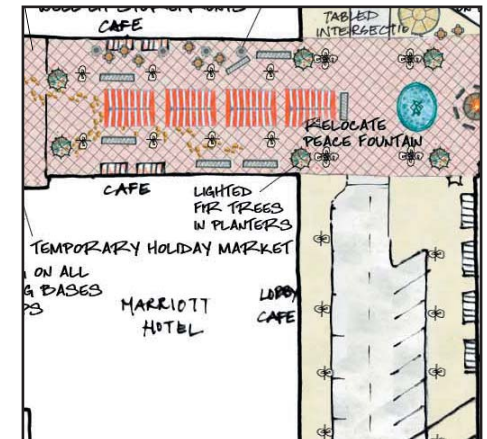


8. Marriott Hotel

Although the Marriott Hotel occupies one of the main corners in downtown Rochester, and the inside of the hotel is a comfortable and welcoming place with many places to sit, eat and drink, from the outside the Marriott resembles an unfriendly fortress more than a hotel. The challenge is to make the exterior fit with the attractive qualities of the interior! Some of this can be accomplished with enhancements to the ground floor such as awnings but the real improvements could be made by retrofitting the ground floor of the building so that it has a stronger presence on the street, a better pedestrian orientation and a more inviting entrance. Much of the ground floor is set back behind columns, particularly where people are dropped off by vehicles. If the streets around the building were traffic calmed and a stronger pedestrian orientation established throughout the area, then the ground floor of the building could be extended out and people could be dropped off on the street under a colorful and welcoming canopy.



Summer



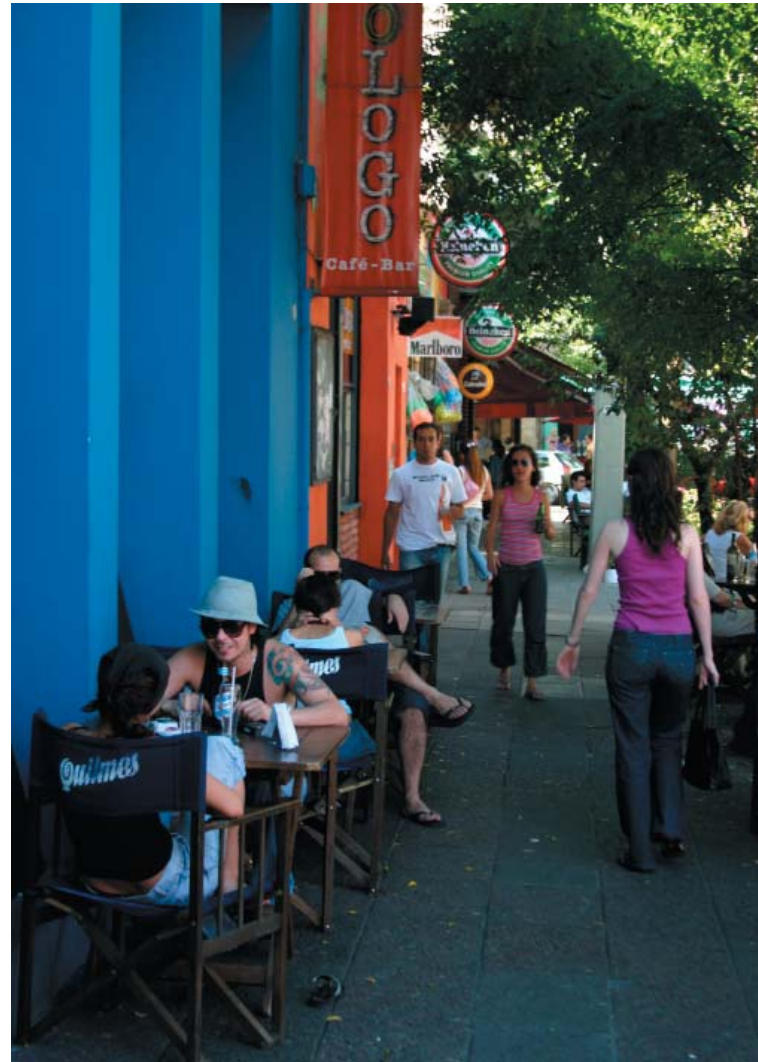
Winter



A stronger presence at the corner
Strengthen the hotel's identity at the corner by an improved entrance, lighting, and more active ground floor uses

Street level amenities

Places for people to sit outside, a bar or café inside that has outdoor seating, activity inside that is visible from the outside



An inviting hotel entrance

Relocate the entrance out onto the street where the bustling hotel activity will add activity to the area around it, rather than take it away

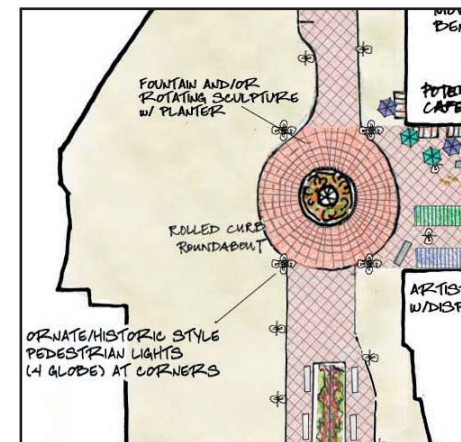


Oslo, Norway

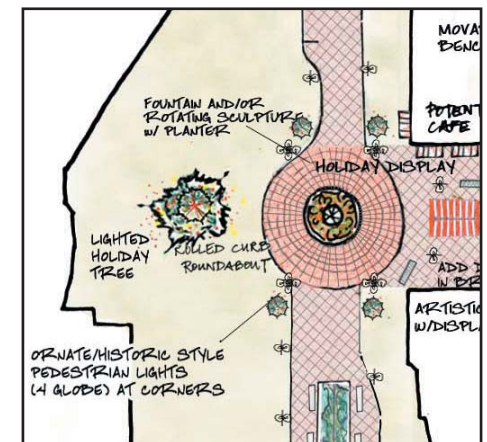
9. Annenberg Plaza

The recently completed Gonda Building and Annenberg Plaza provide a strong anchor to this end of First Street. The closed street with the raised planters provides a pedestrian oriented area but also a focal point around which a range of activities could be planned. It is also a place where many pedestrians pass by. However it has weak edges on nearly every side which detracts from it achieving its potential as an attraction. And with many of the shops at the lower subway level, many of its potential users may not even be aware of the plaza's existence.

Annenberg Plaza resembles the Channel Garden planters in Rockefeller Center, New York City. The Channel Gardens planters were originally used as only a planting bed. And it was only after Rockefeller Center put benches along the outer edge of the planters (and discovered that people liked to sit on them) that the managers realized that this area could be a destination. Today these planters are changed eleven times a year with varying horticulture, art, and a variety of other displays. A farmers market is located next to them on Friday nights and the bases of most of the buildings have been retrofitted to become more retail oriented and pedestrian friendly. The result after thirty years of change is a much more pleasant and economically vigorous place.



Summer



Winter



Seasonal activities

Ice sculpture competitions, holiday tree and exhibits will draw people into the plaza during the winter



Focal point

Tie together First Street and Second Avenue and Annenberg Plaza; create a visual terminus to the two streets; limit vehicles at the intersection, possible place for lighted holiday tree and lighting display, large temporary sculpture at other times of year (e.g. like the flower dog at Rockefeller Center)

Bandshell for performances

Space for performances in the plaza with a temporary band shell to provide a focus for the events



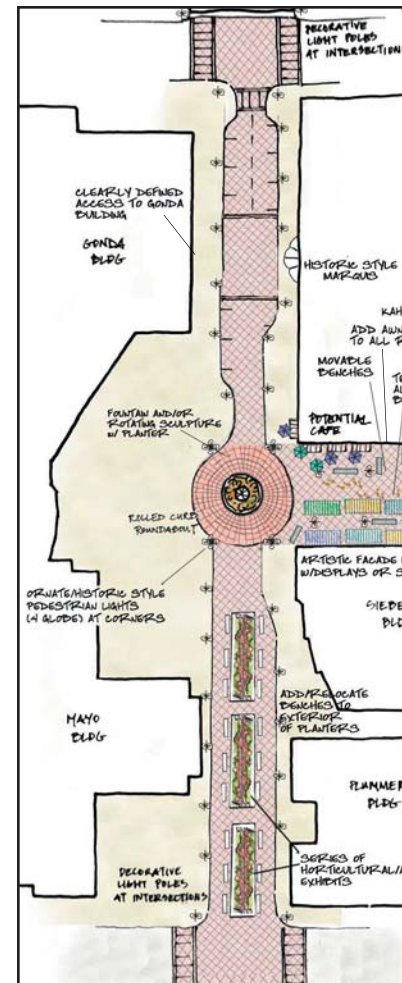
Outdoor movies

A temporary screen can be erected for outdoor movies, televised sporting events or giant video games

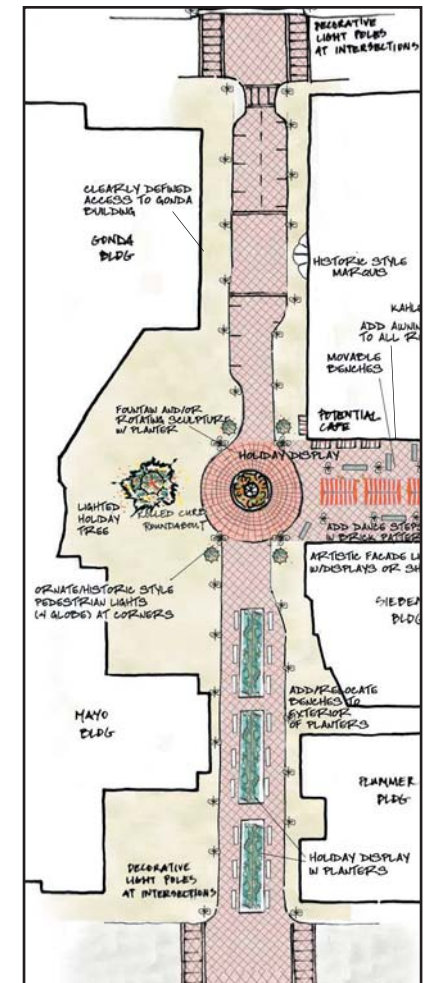


10. Second Avenue

Second Avenue, like First Street, is a street that is little used by vehicles but is still perceived as a place for cars rather than pedestrians – basically it lacks an identity as anything. At the same time, Second Avenue plays an important role as the main entrance to the Kahler Hotel and to the Gonda Building across the street. This important function could be dramatically enhanced by improving the character of the two entrances. The street could easily be narrowed, its surface and character made more pedestrian, and the two entrances be emphasized through canopies, lighting and especially at the Kahler Hotel, through improved ground floor retail.



Summer



Winter

Limited vehicle access
Traffic calmed street with drop-offs
for visitors to Kahler and Gonda
Building, a pavement surface to fit with
Annenberg Plaza and the First Street
Promenade



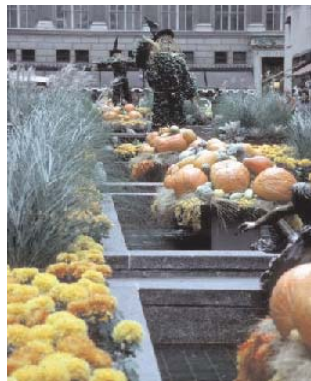
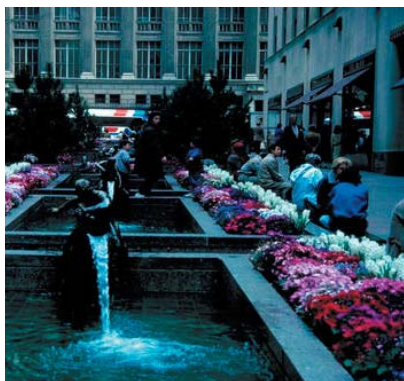
Entrances
Enhance building
entrances with canopies,
lighting, plantings



Rotating horticultural and other displays
A frequently changing planting bed will provide color and
seasonal interest at the entrance and help pull passers-by into
the square



Access to transit
Bus passengers, local
employees and shoppers
can reach the buses on
Second Street through this
connection with the First
Street Promenade area



Mid-block crosswalk
Construct a well-defined crosswalk
mid-block between the Kahler and
the Gonda building for ease of
pedestrian crossing



First Street Promenade, Rochester 37



A Management Strategy for First Street Promenade



The success of Rochester's First Street Promenade will depend to a large degree on careful management and a high level of programming. The entire ground floor level, indoor and out, will be viewed as a whole, with the retail uses complementing the promenade's activities. Some entity will need to oversee the development, the additional retail uses and the event programming on the plaza and the promenade.

A Program of Year-Round Activities

The area should have an ever-changing cavalcade of events and activities all year-round. They should be developed as part of seasonal or thematic programs, instead of stand-alone events. Building tenants should be invited to promote their products and businesses outside where feasible in the promenade, while the City of Rochester and downtown organizations will also be invited to sponsor events. Events will could include (but not be limited to):

- Outdoor movies projected on a large screen on the façade of one of the hotels or the Gonda building, or suspended from the skyway on the First Street Promenade.
- Outdoor concerts and plays on a temporary stage erected on Annenberg Plaza.
- Sports demonstrations and promotional events
- Outdoor markets and fairs, such as: a farmers market, antique shows, art fairs, car shows, flower shows and technology fairs, along First Street Promenade.
- Skating rink or outdoor ice/snow sculpture events during the winter.
- on either Peace or Annenberg Plaza.

An Open-Ended Design

Another key factor in the success of any public space is its ability to evolve and change over time. To develop richness and texture, and improve with age, a space needs to adapt to changing needs over time. The design of Rochester's First Street Promenade should be flexible, to allow for this inevitable evolution. The ground floor of all buildings should be retro-fitted so that they provide a more versatile structure for retail and so that they can serve a variety of uses over time. And as the neighborhood grows and changes around it, the First Street Promenade will become an integral part of the broader pedestrian district.

Case Studies

The following case studies of different summer and winter programming examples, taken from around the world, show how other communities have transformed their public spaces into prized places and spectacular gathering spots.

Case Study: Paris Plage, Paris, France

SUMMER SPECIAL EVENTS



Creating a place

For one month during the summer, the River Seine and Hotel de Ville (City Hall in Paris) provides the backdrop for the Paris Plage, a temporary beach for Parisians in their own city; the emphasis is primarily on children and families



City Hall's front porch

The volleyball court is surrounded by deck chairs, kiosks and palm trees



Beach volleyball

The front of the City Hall turns into a sand volleyball court

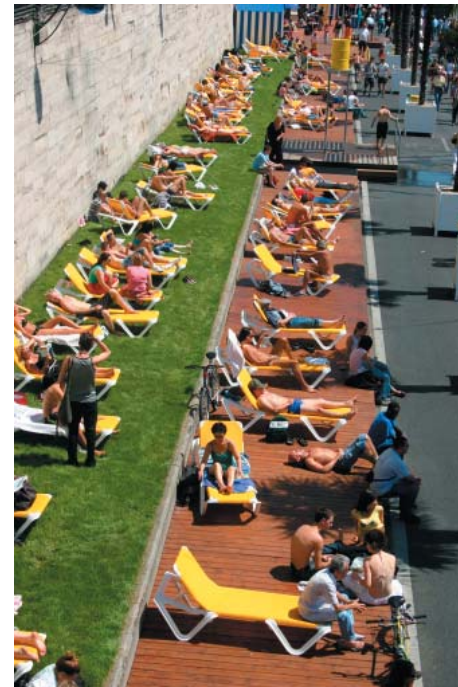
Transforming streets

The river road is closed and people enjoy the pedestrian-only promenade, temporary palm trees, beach chairs and umbrellas fill the river bank



Signage

Identifiable signs announce the activities accompanying the event



The "beach"

People stretch out along the entire mile-long "beach"

Case Study: Paris Plage, Paris, France

SUMMER SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunbathing

Beach chairs and umbrellas line the road



Shaded benches

A variety of types of seating are provided



Games

Games, such as bocce, line the street



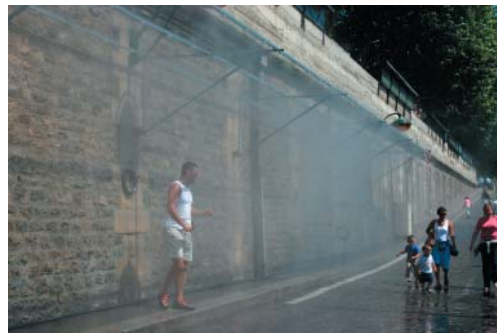
Children's games

A variety of types of games are provided, ranging from water sprinklers to rock climbing to a ropes course



Access to water

Misters and sprinklers are found throughout the Paris Plage



Case Study: Rockefeller Plaza, New York City

SEASONAL STRATEGIES

Rockefeller Plaza

Rockefeller Plaza is a street approximately 200' long and 75' wide that is closed to traffic. A variety of types of activities occur at the plaza during all times of the year.

Changing art displays

The bushes are pruned to represent different popular characters and other figures; the displays change with the seasons



Variety of seating options

Temporary benches, like this circular one, are placed in the center of the closed street



Special interest shows

The area hosts special shows, such as the old automobile show and aerospace technology exhibit



Case Study: Rockefeller Plaza, New York City

SEASONAL STRATEGIES



Temporary market

Temporary markets in the plaza during certain times of the year



Temporary greenhouse

The greenhouse hosts orchid and other plant shows



Fashion show

Channel Gardens hoses various events such as the fashion show, with the red carpet rolled out



Ice rink

The ice rink at Rockefeller Center has become a tradition unto itself; people come just to skate at this famous rink



Transportation options

The closed street allows for various types of uncommon transportation

Case Study: Edinburgh & Greenock, Scotland

WINTER USE CONSIDERATIONS



Activities for kids and adults
Fun, interactive uses can attract people of all ages



Local market products
Local products increases the uniqueness of the market



A major destination
An ice skating rink could be a main feature in Peace Plaza



Refreshments
Warm food and beverages in convenient locations

Holiday market
Temporary markets near other attractions to increase crowds



Holiday tree
A large tree in Annenberg Plaza could be a main feature of the winter programming



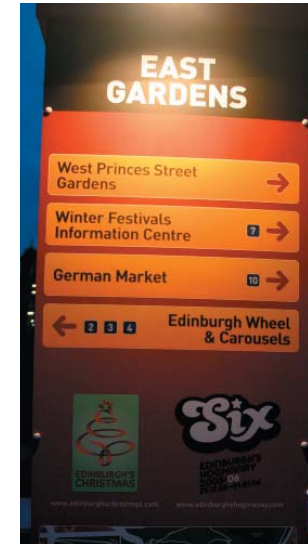
Case Study: Edinburgh & Greenock, Scotland

WINTER LIGHTING CONSIDERATIONS

Lighted trees
Lighted trees along
major streets



Highlight building architecture
Lighting can enhance the architecture of prominent buildings



Signage

Clear, well placed signs to direct people to and mark important destinations, and give the area an identity



Decorative
lighting
Draws attention
to public buildings
(Scotland Library,
left) and destinations

Case Study: Paris, France

WINTER USE CONSIDERATIONS



“Outdoor” dining

Plastic walls from canopies allow patrons to eat on the street and stay warm

Trees and snow

Temporary pine trees, lighted and mounded with “snow” create the feeling of being in the country, in the city, at intersections and around ice rink



Overhead canopies

Canopies help create a sense of place



Market stalls
Markets stay open day and night to provide ample opportunities for locals and visitors to shop

Heat lamps

Heat lamps for extended outdoor dining seasons



Holiday market

Temporary holiday market to draw people to the area and support local artisans



A major destination

Ice skating rinks (at Eiffel Tower, right) with temporary pine trees along edges



Food vendors

Kiosks can stay open year round

Case Study: Paris, France

WINTER LIGHTING CONSIDERATIONS

Retail
decorations

Lighted store
facades along major
streets



Day and evening
lighting

Lights can be used both
during the day and
night to create different
effects in the same
space



Festive street
lighting

Bright, fun colors to
enhance otherwise
dark areas



Overhead
lighting

Lighted canopy
structures to enclose
the street and give
character to certain
areas



Facade lighting

Highlight prominent buildings
during the winter months



Decorative street lighting

Holiday lighting over streets to help create a
festive atmosphere



First Street Promenade, Rochester 47

Case Study: Zurich, Germany

TEMPORARY BENCH ART EXHIBIT



Zurich bench art exhibit

In the summer of 1999, the city of Zurich installed approximately 300 temporary benches from different artists. Downtown businesses and corporations sponsored individual artists to build a bench. Each artist started with the same basic module and were free to transform it as they best saw fit. A program such as this for the First Street Promenade area could be a successful way to create excitement and energy for the improved downtown area.



Case Study: Zurich, Germany

TEMPORARY BENCH ART EXHIBIT





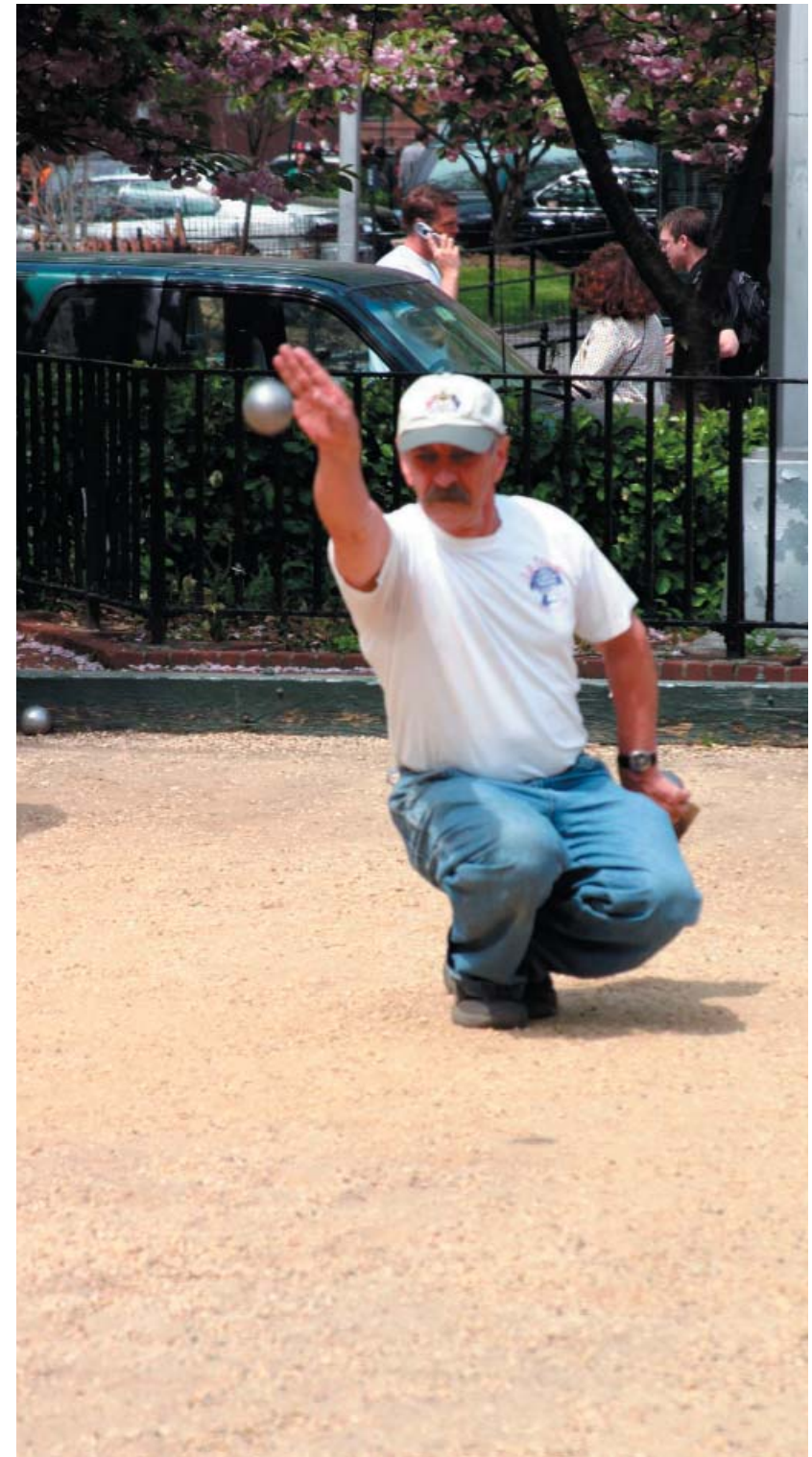
Bryant Park, New York City

What makes a great public place?

- **Image and Identity.** Historically, promenades and town squares were the focal point of communities, and they traditionally gave identity to an entire city. Sometimes a fountain was used to give the central character of a square: think of the Trevi Fountain in Rome or the Swann fountain in Philadelphia's Logan Circle. And many of the grand squares had great civic buildings such as religious institutions, libraries, etc. Today, creating a promenade or square that becomes the most significant place in a city and that gives identity to the city is a huge challenge, but meeting this challenge is absolutely necessary if great public places are to return.
- **Accessibility.** To be successful, a place needs to be easy to get to. The best places in the world are always easily accessible by foot. The streets around them are narrow; the crosswalks are well marked; the lights are timed for pedestrians, not vehicles; the traffic moves slowly; and transit is nearby. On the other hand, a place surrounded by lanes of fast-moving traffic cuts the area off from pedestrians and deprives it of its essential element: people.



- **Amenities.** The amenities that are located in a public place make it comfortable for people to use. A bench or waste receptacle in just the right location can make a big difference in how people choose to use a place, lighting that helps to give a place an identity but that also highlights specific activities, entrances, or pathways is key. Amenities can be temporary or permanent, but the essence of a good amenity is that it helps create the setting for social interaction. Public art can be a great magnet for children of all ages to come together.
- **Flexible design.** The use of a promenade changes during the course of the day, week, and year and to respond to this potential use, flexibility needs to be built in.





- **Seasonal Strategy.** A successful place today can no longer have just one design or management strategy. The best places like Rockefeller Center in New York, Bryant Park next to the public library in New York, or Campus Martius, a new square in Detroit, change with the seasons. Elements such as skating rinks, outdoor cafes, markets, horticulture displays, art and sculpture are used as a flexible element during different seasons.
- **Attractions and Destinations.** Any great public place has a variety of smaller “places” within it that helps to establish a human scale. These attractions can be anything - outdoor cafes, fountains, sculpture, or an event. Attractions or destinations don’t need to be big to make the square a true destination. In fact, some of the best urban places have numerous small attractions that, when put together, draw people all through the day.

We often use “The Power of Ten” concept to set a goal for a destination. Creating ten places with ten things to do in each place sets a full program from which to develop infrastructure, management and design parameters that create the setting for successful public spaces.



- **Active Edges.** Frederick Law Olmsted's vision of the "inner park" and the "outer park" (or public space or promenade) is just as relevant today as it was 100 years ago. The streets and sidewalks around a public place greatly affect its accessibility and use, as do the buildings that surround it. Imagine a square fronted on each side by 15-foot blank walls. Then imagine it next to a public library: the library doors open right onto the square; people sit outside and read on the steps; maybe the children's reading room has an outdoor space on the square, or even a bookstore and cafe. An active, welcoming outer "square" is essential to the well-being of the inner "square".
- **Reach out like an Octopus.** As important as the edges of a public place is the way that the streets and sidewalks and the ground floor uses along them lead into the area. The influence of a good gathering place (such as Union Square in New York) starts at least a block away where the vehicle traffic begins to slow down, the pedestrian use increases and becomes easier, elements in the area are visible from a distance, and the ground floor uses in buildings encourage pedestrians to move toward the area.



- **Management: Central to the Solution.** Fluid, changing places are the ones that people return to time and time again. The only way to achieve this is by a management organization set up to understand and manage the pulse of a public place. For example, a good manager understands existing and potential users and gears events to both types of people. They are so familiar with the use patterns that waste receptacles get emptied at just the right time. Good managers create a feeling of comfort and safety in a square, fixing and maintaining it so that people have visible signs that someone is in charge.
- **Diverse Funding Sources.** A well managed public place is generally beyond the scope of the average city department, which is why partnerships have been established to operate most of the best public places in the United States. These partnerships seek to supplement what the city can provide with funding from diverse sources which can include rent from cafes or other small commercial uses or markets on the site, film shoots, benefits, taxes on adjacent properties, etc.

